

CHAIN REACTION BIBLE SUNDAY 2006

CAR ILLUSTRATION

Optional activity for use in introducing confession

Aim

- To give a clear illustration of a common chain reaction where each element needs to be clean and ready to work for the reaction to happen.
- To engage all the church in telling the story and seeing what happens
- To illustrate the need for confession, to be cleaned up and ready for our part in God's chain reaction.

How it works

You will need six volunteers, a mix of ages and make sure the older people are game for a laugh! You will also need to divide the rest of the congregation into six sections, each backing their representative at the front. You will then tell a story showing the chain reaction that makes a car work. Whichever "part" has the quietest support from their section of the congregation, then becomes dirty, and is unable to fulfil its role in the reaction.

At the start, tell each volunteer they are going to represent an important part of a car. There is a noise they must make every time that part is mentioned. Part of the congregation will help them to make it too.

Volunteer 1 – Keys

They and their part of the congregation have to make the noise **JINGLE JANGLE JINGLE JANGLE JINGLE JANGLE**. Give the volunteer a bunch of keys to shake too!

Volunteer 2 –Oil

The noise is **I AM SOOOOO SLICK!** At the same time they need to pretend to comb their hair back.

Volunteer 3 – Petrol

The noise is **OH I AM SO EXPENSIVE**. Whilst they are saying their bit, get some photocopied Monopoly money and throw it over your volunteer.



Volunteer 4 –Spark Plugs

The noise is **SNAP CRACKLE AND POP**. Your volunteer needs to do a star jump when they say POP!

Volunteer 5 – Gears

The noise is **ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE** in the style of a racing car changing through the gears, long and drawn out and getting higher in pitch! They also need to look like they are driving a racing car!

Volunteer 6 – Exhaust

The noise is **COUGH, COUGH, COUGH, COUGH, SPLUTTER, SPLUTTER, COUGH, COUGH**. Your volunteer also has to collapse onto the floor – exhausted!

When the congregation hears the words “and it all works together”, they have to make all their respective noises at once!

You may want to run through their reactions a few times before you start the story.

The story

Graham's alarm rang for the fourth time - shaking him out of his sleep. Peering at his clock through bleary eyes the truth dawned. He had just 30 minutes to get to church. If only he'd not stayed up all night watching *The Simpsons*! Leaping from bed Graham splashed water on his face, threw on some clothes and was soon heading for the door. Then came the worrying thought – “where are my **keys**? I know I had them last night.”

Frantically he started pulling out the sofa cushions, opening drawers and checking coat pockets. “Oh no, without my **keys** I can't get anywhere. My car needs the **keys** to start.” As panic settled in, he desperately tried his trouser pockets. He felt something metallic, attached to a very attractive Scooby Doo key fob – his **keys**! “They were there all the time! I can't believe I didn't check there first!”

He ran through the front door, jumped into his car and put the **keys** into the ignition – suddenly his brain started to think how strange it was that just by putting this little bit of metal into the ignition, the whole car starts and gets him to where he wants to go.

It's quite amazing when you think about it. The moment he puts the **keys** in the ignition, the **oil** starts to move around the whole engine and **oil** is very greasy! It goes over every part of the engine and makes it run smoothly. “That's what **oil** does best; it keeps everything lubricated and makes it ready to go!”



He tried to focus on the task at hand but it was too late, his mind jumped to how much money he has to spend on **petrol** every week – if only he had gone for the diesel instead of the **petrol** model when he bought his car! He saw the red light on the dashboard and realised he probably needed to visit the **petrol** station this morning or he might not make it to church. “Oh no that’s going to make me even later! I’ll have to just keep driving and hope that I have enough.”

He stopped for a second and felt confused. “How on earth does the petrol make my car move?” And then he remembered – of course, the **spark plugs**. They were invented by Edmund Berger – what a bright spark! He chuckled at his own humour and thought about how the **spark plugs** ignited the **petrol** making it burn and produce power. What clever **spark plugs** he thought! So that’s the **keys**, the **oil**, the **petrol** and the **spark plugs**! “What else helps my car move?”

Ah yes, the **gears**, they make sure that power connects to the engine and makes the wheels move! There are lots of different **gears** to go through as your car goes faster! Some cars even have six **gears**!

Then of course all the stuff the **petrol** gives off as it is ignited, is sent out of the engine through the **exhaust**. Wow, everything works together! The **exhaust** gets rid of all the nasty stuff from the engine and the process keeps going! From the **keys** to the **oil** to the **petrol** to the **spark plugs** to the **gears** and to the **exhaust**, everything has its part to play **and it all works together**.”

Graham woke up with a start and realised that it was all a dream! He looked at his clock and realised that he had slept through another alarm call and now has only 15 minutes to get to church. He quickly got ready and headed out the door.

(At this point in the story, stop and decide who the quietest group was. Explain that because they were the quietest, they are now not going to work properly, explain how things never work properly when they’re really dirty, to illustrate their messy state, throw a bucket of leaves or confetti over them! You could of course do something worse if you feel the inclination - throwing dirty socks maybe? We’ll leave that to your imagination! After this, explain what their new noise would be – maybe a thud or a crackle and that will be their new sound for their item. Then read this short part of the story below.)

So Graham got into his car and put the **key** in the ignition, the **oil** started moving around the engine, the **petrol** was ignited by the **spark plugs**, the **gears** engaged the engine and the **exhaust** cleared out what was left over. Oh, hang on a minute, that hasn’t happened. All because of (**dirty part**). Without that part, the whole process falls down and the car can’t move. Graham missed church that morning waiting for the breakdown truck to come and sort him out.



Thank the volunteers and let them sit down.

Close by saying that God wants us to be part of the chain reaction he starts and we all have our part to play. But sometimes we end up getting dirty and messy and our bit of the link stops working because we stop listening to God.

The amazing thing is that Jesus drives a breakdown truck! All we need to do is phone the helpline and he comes to us, cleans us up and sets us going again.

Ask everyone to think about parts they want Jesus to clean up. Get them to imagine they're phoning the helpline together as you pray:

Dear God, thank you that although we get messy at times, you never leave us like that but offer to come and clean us up. We ask for that now. Please clean us so that we can be part of your chain reaction and can work with you so that other people will learn about your love.

Amen

This illustration has been prepared for Bible Sunday by Jamie Hill, Bible Society Events Officer with input from Beth Read Development Officer – Churches.

